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HOW I OBTAINED A COMMISSION:

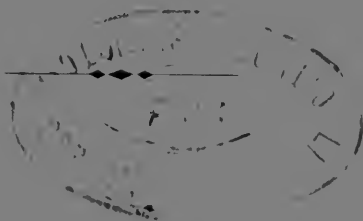
OR,

One Phase of the Lobby.

A FARCE

IN ONE ACT,

By SYDNEY THORNHILL AND R. J. SOUTHWORTH.



WASHINGTON, D. C.

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CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES.

Wilberforce Smith, U. S. S.—A pompous old man; blue coat, brass buttons; buff vest and pants.

Daisy Wilson—A young lady of good taste in moderate circumstances; plain dress.

John Jackson—Young lawyer; 1st, thread-bare black cloth suit; 2d, uniform of a Lieutenant U. S. A., and 3d, uniform of Colonel U. S. A.

Napoleon—Young negro man; 1st, blue-checked shirt, gray vest and pants; 2d, well-worn uniform of Corporal U. S. A.; 3d, uniform of 1st Sargeant.

Phillis Jenkins—Negro servant girl; dress of a housemaid

HOW I OBTAINED A COMMISSION.

ACT.

SCENE.—*Plain Parlor. Flat in 4th grooves. Door at C. F. opening into a hall. A door at L. E. A grate or stove at R. 2 E.. Sofa in the corner at L. U. E. Table and chairs at L. U. E. Tete a tete Ottoman at R. C. When the curtain rises, Daisy Wilson and Jackson are discovered sitting on the Ottoman.*

Jack. (Jumping up suddenly.) I tell you, Daisy, I must do something, *(walks towards C. and pauses; then turns towards Daisy)* I have been drilled in the law; I have attempted to practice it, but the people are too prudent now to need the services of lawyers. *(pauses.)* If I go on at this rate I'll soon become fossilised.

Daisy. (Reclining and smiling.) Well, my dear, what do you want? "Take it and pay the price," says the poet philosopher.

Jack. It's not what I want. It's what I don't want. To tell you the truth, I am tired of this hum-drum gentlemanly life of a professional man, which makes him too proud to engage in legitimate business by which he might make a fortune and become influential.

Daisy. I wish you would find something to do that would suit your restless spirit.

Jack. What's the use of our being engaged. By the time I've made money enough to support myself decently by practicing law, I will be nothing but a crusty, cross-grained, growling old bachelor.

Daisy. (Approaching Jack at C.) Why Jack you look upon the dark side of your future. Consider how many lawyers have made fortunes, and have made their names immortal in the service of their country. Come now, *(appealingly,)* don't be discouraged.

Jack. My future eclipsed by this absurd idea that an honorable profession is better for me than a legitimate business, *(pauses in thought while Daisy shows signs of impatience.)* I have it! I am going to enlist! I can then rise from the ranks to—it may be—a general. I have been told that in war times generals are quickly made. *(Gets his hat from the table, returns to Daisy and pauses,)* but then a fellow might get killed. *(shudders,)* Ugh! that would break off our engagement, wouldn't it, Daisy dear?

Daisy. Yes, but a brave patriot never entertains such fears.

Jack. That's so; I'll enlist. (*takes her hand and kisses her.*) Good bye; I can work it. (*goes towards C. D.*) I'll do nothing rash before I see you again. Good bye! (*Exit, C. D.*)

Daisy. Good bye, success to you. (*pauses.*) Now I wonder how I can help him.—Poor fellow! (*walks to L. C. and back to C. in deep thought.*) Let me see! Now that Congress has met, if I become acquainted with any honorable (*sarcastic emphasis*) member, I may, by being skillfully passive, secure a commission for Jack. (*goes to the table and sits.*) I must study my case, (*pauses with her elbow resting on the table.*)

Enter NAPOLEON at C. D.

Nap. (*At U. C. laughing.*) Keuch! Keuch!! Keuch!!! (*throws his hands on his knees. Daisy looks at him.*) Ha! Ha! Ha! Oh! Miss Daisy, He! He! He!

Daisy. Well Napoleon, what pleases you so much?

Nap. (*Approaching her.*) Oh! Miss Daisy, (*laughs,*) He! He! Keuch! Dar's such a funny man out dar; (*laughs,*) He! He! He's bar footed on de top of he's head, (*laughs.*) an' he's face is so red it look like a coal fire—(*laughs*) Ha! Ha! Keuch! Keuch!

Daisy. Hush! Napoleon. Be quiet. The gentleman will hear you.—

Nap. He do look so funny.

Daisy. What does he want?

Nap. He de same man I seed follerin' you and marse Jack round capitol tother day, He axed me to gib you dis card, (*laughing, gives her the card.*)

Daisy. (*Looking at the card.*) Oh! he is the honorable Senator Smith from—A.—

Nap. Mus' I fotch him in?

Daisy. Not yet. He is the very man I met at the reception last winter—(*writes a note.*) Napoleon! I want you to go out the back way and catch Mr. Jackson. He has just gone. Give him this note, and then show the gentleman in.

Nap. (*Takes the note.*) I'll gib Marse Jack de note, and den fotch the gemmon in. (*Exit NAP. at L. E.*)

Daisy. (*Walks to the ottoman and sits.*) Now I am engaged, and have warned Jack, there can be no impropriety in meeting an aged counsellor and lawmaker of the nation.

(Enter NAPOLEON at C. D. ushering in Smith.)

Nap. (*Striking at attitude at R. U. C. SMITH at U. C.*) De honorable Mr. Smith U. S. S., (*aside*) dat spell us, me an' him.

Daisy. (Rising.) I am pleased to meet you, Senator. Napoleon take the Senator's hat and cloak. (*Napoleon takes the hat and cloak, putting the hat on struts out at C. D.*) Be seated sir.

Smith. (Advancing and bowing as gallantly as his age permits, they sit on the ottoman.) Miss Wilson, on this day I esteem myself the happiest of men.

Daisy. Ah? Senator, allow me to congratulate you.

Smith. You may do so indeed, for upon this day I discover the object of a most constant and devoted pursuit, and best of all, I find it even more precious and beautiful than I had hoped.

Daisy. (Aside.) Goodness! what an emphatic old gentleman. (*Looking out.*) Thank Heaven! There comes Jack, (*sees him in the hall, rushes to him.*)

(*Enter Jack.*)

Daisy. (Meets Jack at U. C.) Oh! Jack you did not go after all, did you. I am so glad, (*offers her hands.*)

Jack. Of course I didn't, Daisy. Do you think I would leave you coz? (*takes her hands.*)

Smith. An unexpected move on the part of the minority, (*referring to Jack's youth.*)

Daisy. (Turning to Smith.) Excuse me, senator, allow me to introduce to you my cousin, Mr. John Jackson, Bachelor of laws. Cousin Jack, this is Senator Smith, of—Oh! what is your State Senator?

Smith. (Rising) Oh! never mind the State; I am the only Smith in the Senate, (*bowing to Jack*) I am glad to know you, sir.

Jack. (Bowing low, in a slightly sarcastic tone.) I am honored in meeting one of the highest officers of the nation. (*Daisy nods at Jack significantly.*) Coz., I will just warm myself a little if you and the Senator will excuse me.

Daisy. Certainly Jack. (*Jack sits by the stove with his back towards them: they resume their seats.*)

Smith. (Leaning towards Daisy, and speaking in a low tone.) Who is this cousin of yours?

Daisy. (Leaning towards Smith.) He is cousin Jack. We have grown up together, and are very fond of each other, and this house is his home.

Smith. What is his business?

Daisy. He is a lawyer, but he is so dissatisfied and has such a restless spirit, that I regret he did not enter the army.

Smith. (Anxiously.) Do you think he would like the army?

Daisy. I am sure he would. He often threatens to run away and enlist.

Smith. (*Aside.*) I have an idea—may be I can get rid of him. (*aloud*) I think I can help your cousin to get a commission.

Daisy. Oh! *do* you! He would be delighted at the prospect of entering the army, (*rising*) will you excuse me a moment Senator?

Smith. Certainly. (*Daisy nods at Jack as she goes towards C.D.*)

Daisy. Jack you can manage him alone now. (*Exit.*)

Smith. You are thinking of abandoning your profession, I understand, sir?

Jack. Yes, sir; I am going to enlist in the army as a private, in the hope of rising from the ranks.

Smith. That's patriotic. Have you a military education?

Jack. Well—I have had a drilling in mathematics, and engineering at college, where I had command of a company of cadets. I have studied the art of war on the maps.

Smith. Why, sir! (*jumps up,*) your patriotic spirit, with such an education, that some of our generals would be proud of, deserves to be rewarded with a commission. I think I can help you to get one.

Jack. (*Rising.*) Thank you, sir; I thought of soliciting your aid, but upon reflection I remembered how much members of Congress are bored by office-seekers and lobbyists, that I determined to enlist.

Smith. You must permit me to encourage your patriotism, by aiding you sir! Do you know General Jones?

Jack. No, sir.

Smith. The General in a great personal friend of mine. (*aside.*) We are political opponents, but understand each other, (*aloud,*) I will give you a letter to him, and he will put you in the way of getting a commission. Of course you must not expect to get a commission in the regular army?

Jack. (*Assuming patriotic excitement.*) Anything, Senator, so that I get into the army, and into battle, where amid the roar of artillery, and the rattling of musketry, men forget home, family, friends, and everything but liberty and the wrongs of their country.

Smith. Good! Bravo! (*aside.*) That's precisely what I wish the young gentleman to do, (*aloud.*) You can easily get a commission in a colored regiment.

Jack. I am for the nigger regiments, (*aside,*) they won't know when I make a mistake.

Smith. Well come down to the Capitol at one P. M. to-morrow, and we will talk the matter over, meantime I will see Jones.

Jack. Thank you, Senator, (*takes his hat*) I'll go and tell cousin Daisy—she will be so glad, and I will send her to you.

Smith. Never mind! Don't disturb her! Make my adieus to her. (*aside.*) I will come again when he is out of the way.

(Exit Smith at C. D. Jack after bowing the Senator out goes towards L. C. where he meets Napoleon as he enters.)

(Enter NAPOLEON at L. E.)

Jack. Now Napoleon I am almost certain of my commission, and will probably be ordered to join my regiment immediately. You will then be the only man left in the house, so you must protect your mistress and Philly.

Nap. (aside) I 'spose old Jinny kin protect herself.

Jack. (continuing) And I want you to keep an eye on that old Senator and see that he does not annoy your mistress. You must contrive to be about when he is here. You know then you'll be the natural protector of the family.

Nap. Yes, Marse Jack. I'll do jist so. I'll be a mudder to dem an' I'll stick to dis room like the wool to de nigger.

Jack. Good bye now, I must see about getting ready in case I get my commission (goes towards L. E.) keep a sharp eye on the Senator. (exit L. E.)

Nap. (following.) Golly I'se de natr'al protector of de house. Keuch! Keuch! (struts out, exit L. E.)

(Enter SMITH, C. D.)

Smith (looking around cautiously, rubbing his hands) Ha! Ha! the coast is clear at last. (Approaches the ottoman at R. C.) Well I think now that I have executed that little business about as neatly as possible. I must say that the getting of that interesting young cousin out of the way was a stroke of masterly diplomacy. It has been only two days since I asked Jones to get him a commission and order him to the front, and he is a full fledged lieutenant of the U. S. C. T., and is ordered to report without delay. I think after this I might manage the French Court if I could only get a chance. Ha! Ha! (Rings the bell at table at L. 2 E.)

(Enter NAPOLEON AT C. D.)

Nap. Keuch! Keuch! I'se got my eye on yer (approaching Smith)

Smith Tell your mistress that the Honorable Wilberforce Smith awaits her.

Nap. Yas sah! (aside) De honary Wickedness Smith.

Smith No! Sirrah! The Honorable Wilberforce Smith.

Nap. Yas sah, jist so. Will by force. (aside) By force will you, me an' Marse Jack will see about dat. (exits L. E.)

Smith Upon my word this is a most bewildering creature, she takes my fancy amazingly.

(Enter DAISY AT L. E.)

Daisy (aside at L. C.) Oh! you gay old deceiver!

Smith (Jumps up, meets Daisy at c) Oh! Miss Wilson. My first visit was so diverted from its object that I thus early return to repeat it.

Daisy. Oh! I must thank you Senator for your kindness to my poor cousin.

Smith Not at all! Not at all! To serve you in the slightest manner must ever be my highest and dearest purpose—(*pauses*) and do you not know—

(*Enter NAPOLEON at C. D.*)

Nap. (Rushing towards the stove, Daisy laughs, Smith looks mad) Dat chicken dat you gub me fur de dinner got somethin' de matter wid him sure, he wont die no how I kin fix him. Me and Philly bof fotch him a lick, but it war no go. And so I just come to ax fur your blessed ole fader's double edge razor point Mexican war cutlass?

Daisy. I really don't know, Napoleon, where it is.

Nap. (Going towards C. D.) Den I mus' go up to de Smithsonian Instoot 'an' git a Thomashawk, or a scalp knife, or a battle axe or somethin'. (*Exits C. D.*)

Smith I was about to say, my dear young lady, that, henceforth you must look upon me as your faithful and devoted servant. From the first moment of our meeting your image has—

(*Enter NAPOLEON rushing in.*)

Nap. Dat Chicken! O! dat chicken!

Smith. Damn the chicken!

Nap. That everlastin' tarnation, super natural, nebber to be got rid ob old rooster, (*looking fiercely at Smith.*)

Daisy. (Laughing.) Why Napoleon what's the matter.

Nap. Dat infernal, never say die, stickenplaster beast of a aged tough brazen face, impossible to be kicked out rooster.

Smith. Is the man crazy?

Daisy. Napoleon, what's the matter? (*Laughing.*) Why don't you say. What has the chicken done?

Nap. Done, done, Miss Daisy, done! why it have wormed itself into a spectacle defenceless family, and wormed eberybody else out ob it (*shaking his fist at Smith.*)

Daisy. (Warningly.) Napoleon!

Nap. Yes miss, certainly miss! Done! Why it has swallowed all de rest of de dinner whole, and eat up de axe, and pitches at Philly when she tried to kill it, and upset de cook, and—*damn* it, it taint afeared ob me, and cussed and swore it wouldn't die—dat's all. (*Exit with a rush.*)

Smith. (*Drawing a long breath.*) Is that over? Well, Miss Wilson, it seems that I am destined to interruption this morning. I can only console myself with the reflection that the course of—dare I say it—true love never did run smooth. Forgive me if my precipitancy alarms you. It is only the strong impulse of a still young heart. How could a man be in the presence of so lovely and fair a being as yourself, and fail to experience those sweet and precious—

(*Enter Napoleon at c. d.*)

Nap. O! Miss Daisy! Bress de Lord dat rooster! O! Miss Daisy you'll have to send fur de pliceman dis blessed minit!

Smith. The chicken again, (*jumping up and seizing his hat*)—I can't stand this! Here, Miss Wilson, I had forgotten a pressing engagement. You will pardon my hasty departure—(*aside*) it will give me the excuse for a speedy return—(*aloud.*) It shall not be long before the wings of the young God will bear me to you again; adieu!

Daisy. Good by, sir? (*Exit Smith c. d.*)

(*Napoleon executes a joyous dance and song. Daisy, laughs.*)

Daisy. I don't know whether to scold or praise you. You are certainly a most successful strategist. How poor Jack will laugh. But where is your master?

Nap. He sont word to say dat he'd be har directly: (*steps are heard.*) Why here he comes now! (*Enter Jack in lieutenant's uniform.*)

Daisy. (*Runs to meet him, then coquettishly.*) Well, Mr. Soldier, I thought you were going off without saying good bye. (*Jack takes her hand.*)

Nap. (*Napoleon looks at them, laughs, aside.*) Dey think they-selves happy now, (*looks admiringly at Jack's uniform, aside.*) Golly, don't he look bully. (*Exit c. d.*)

Jack. I have only two minutes to stay. We are ordered off at at once, and I am to join my regiment this afternoon. I have only one thing to ask.

Daisy. Anything, dear Jack.

Jack. When I come again if only for an hour, that you will be my wife.

Daisy. O, Jack, (*reluctantly draws from him.*)

Jack. Well, must I go without, Daisy?

Daisy. No—Yes—I promise.

Jack. (*drawing her towards him affectionately,*) You are an angel, and send me away happy.—Beware of the old Senator! and come see me off— (*exeunt c. d.*)

Nap. (*Enters at l. e. crosses to c. with coal for fire.*) Dat ole Sonitar dont like me bustin in yer and foolin' about de fire when he comes yer. Golly, I'se jist gwine to do what Marse Jack tole me.

Wouldn't I like to see Marse Jack pradin' up and down wid de niggers. Ise jist the garritype of Marse Jack. I was made fur to be a sodger. Golly, wouldn't I make a bully looking koppral? How de debbil is I gwine fur to git a koppral's 'mission, dat's what I want to know. I'll ax dat ole Sonitar, bekase I heard Marse Jack say dat when dem fellars cum aroun' yer mus' git all outer dem you kin. Dey aint fit fur nuffin else. Nex' time he cum I'se gwine to show him how bully I kin read (*listens*) By golly! he hab cum now (*laughs, jumps to take a paper from the table.*) I jist be reading by de stove har, (*kneels before the stove and pretends to read.*)

(*Enter SMITH, sits on the sofa.*)

Smith. (*sees Nap.*) I wonder if that nigger lives in this room. Upon my soul it is as good as a play.

Nap. (*Reading and spelling the words*) dat's g-r-e-a-t, I bet a chaw tobacco dat spell great, b-a-t bat; dats it, great bat, what de'y play base ball wid. T-l-e spell til. Golly, I knowd I'ud got it rite. Great battle, dat's what it is, no base ball bout denf things; dey means cannon balls big as a nig's head an almost as hard. Now I'se gwine to git de news. Great battle on de R-a-p, I knows dat; dat's ole Rappahanock, war I use to catch catfish. C-o-l—dat word's culled—what I calls nigger—R-e-g dat word means nigger regiments. F-o-u-g-h t fought w-e-l-l dat means well. Great battle on de ole Rappahanock, niggers fit bully. I knowed the niggers wud fite. Golly, cant I fite. Guess if sum of dese big men knowed how bully I can read an' rite an' fite dey would gib me a 'mission.

Smith. By jove, that's the very thing. I can get rid of this fellow now. (*Walks towards Nap.*) What is your name, my man?

Nap. (*jumping up apparently confused*) ax your pardon, sir, I'se got no name but Nap.

Smith. What is your full name?

Nap. Louis Napoleon Bonaparte.

Smith. That's a good name, now tell me, what is it you want?

Nap. I wants a koppral's mission, dats what I wants. Wants to be a officer.

Smith. Well, I will give you a note to General Jones, and he will make you a corporal, and send you to your master's regiment (*goes to the table and writes.*)

Nap. (*Dancing behind his back.*) Golly, Ise gwine to be a officer.

Smith. Here, take this note to the War Department, and give it to General Jones. He will attend to you. (*Exit Nap. L. E.*)

Smith. Well, I trust I shall have a rather easier time now that I have removed all the male portion of the family. (*Takes a book.*)

(*Enter Phillis behind him, approaching slyly.*)

Phillis. (To audience) Lord o' massy its a real live-Senate chamber, (*dances straight, up and down,*) and to think however this bressed house should come to have a great big Congress-er-man a wisitin it. And he be one ob de men as sits all day long wid dey feet in de air and eats all de gold up, so dat eberybody else kin get no money, only paper, (*snifs.*) He aint so much to look at arter all.

(*Moves a succession of courtesies. Senator dosen't see her, and reads on. Phillis standing before him, courtesies again.*)

Phillis Is dem Senitorious manners? (*courtesies again,*) hem.

Smith. O! Is your mistress at home?

Phillis. Yes, sir; she tole me to say dat she war not berry well, and war sorry to say she couldn't see you unless you could remain awaitin a long time.

Senator. O! Very well, it is very comfortable here—I will wait.

Phillis. Yes, sar; (*handing a note to Smith,*) a gemmon left dis note at de door, an' axed me fur to gub it to you. (*Retires towards L. E.*)

Smith. (*At L. C. Reading.*) "Hurry up to the War Department. I wish to see you immediately on pressing business. The contract is about to be awarded to the other party. If your vote can be secured on a certain measure our friends are sure of the contract."

'Jones.'

Stay. Tell your Mistress I'll call again. (*Exit C. D.*)

Phillis. Yes, sir; I knowed that note would fotch him away. (*Goes towards C. D.*)

(*Enter NAPOLEON at C. D. in uniform of a corporal*)

Phillis. (*Meeting Nap. at L., looks surprised.*) Good, golly nigger, whar did you steal dem sodger clothes from?

Nap. (*Crosses to C.*) Mus' be crazy, gal. I don' steal no sodger clothes. Bought dis uniform down at ole Moses fur three dollars, I did.

Phillis. What business you got wid dem on, ha!

Nap. Didn't Miss Daisy tole yer I wer a officer ob dese United States army?

Phillis. You knows well enuf dat Miss Daisy warn't gwine to tole me no lies about you, nigger.

Nap. Anyhow, Ise a koppral sure enuf, an' Ise gwine away to-day to jine Marse Colonel Jack's Nigger Regiment.

Phillis. Now, goodness gracious, 'live! dar dat nigger stan' rite afore me wid dat bare black face an' tell me dat lie. Ise no fool, I don't believe no sich lies as dem.

Nap. Ise a koppral. 'deed and deed I is. I show you de papers, (*shows her a corporal's warrant.*)

Phillis. (*Looking at the warrant.*) It do look like de paper Marse Jack got when he war pinted blue tenant, sure enuf. Is dat yours?

Nap. (*Putting up the warrant.*) Aint fur nobody else but dis

chile. Now, Philly, Ise gwine away to fite fur you niggers soon as Miss Daisy gibbs me a letter fur Marse Jack. I wants to gib you sum advice.

Phillis. (*Who has been admiring the uniform.*) I nebber seed a nigger in sodger closes before in all my born days.

Nap. Nebber mind, niggers in sodger's close, but cum to attention of the koppral. You knows you is a 'telligerent country-band.

Phillis. 'Deed Ise no country-band. Ise a contrary-band dat what I is.

Nap. No, dat aint it. You is a country-band 'cause when de war first broke out all de niggers come to Washington in bands from de country to git office, dat why dey is called country-bands.

Phillis. I thought it war 'cause dey is so contrary-wise dat dey war called contrary-bands.

Nap. No! It is what I tell you, now listen to me, Marse Jack tole me.—Eberyttime dat ole Senator cums, you must be roun' in an' out of de room

Phillis. Deed will dis chile watch him. If dat ole fella, says anything Miss Daisy don't like I'll scald him to death, deed I will honey, (*bell rings.*) Dar's Miss Daisy's bell. I must see what she wants. (*exit L. E.*)

Nap. Won't I make the niggers fite when I gits command of 'em! (*Enter Philly.*)

Phillis. Miss Daisy wants you to comê rite long wid me dis minuit to her room. She wants to tell yer what to tell Marse Jack, an' youse got to go off to him rite away. (*Exeunt L. E.*)

(*Enter Smith C. D.*)

Smith. Now since that young fop is gone—the big nigger got off, and I saw the young lady at the head of the stairs as I came in. Come, we'll see if the pretty quarry will escape me now!

(*Enter Daisy L. E.*)

Daisy. Good afternoon, Senator!

Smith. At last, I see you once more.

Daisy. Oh! Senator, you have played the recruiting officer among my household, and carried off my right hand man; I declare you have left me quite defenceless.

Smith. No! say not so—never defenceless while I am here to strike or die for you! (*an attitude.*)

Daisy. O, you are joking, Senator, have you attended any more of those charming re-unions of Mrs. Clarendon's this season?

Smith. Ah! my dear young lady, I was about to say there is one remembrance of that auspicious occasion of our meeting that haunts me like a sweet dream, that rings thro' the portals of memory that will live in my—in my—I may say in my ears forever.

Daisy. (*Aside.*) In his ears! (*to him.*) You did not get the ear ache did you?

Smith. O! no! no! no! it was a witchery, an enchantment, an arrow from the quiver of your charms.

- Daisy.* (*Anxiously.*) Did it get into your ear sir!
- Smith.* (*Uncertainly.*) My ear! O, yes—assuredly my ear—it pierced my ear and quivered in my heart.
- Daisy.* (*Apprehensively.*) What was it sir?
- Smith.* It was a—love song.
- Daisy.* O, a love song?
- Smith.* By you.
- Daisy.* O, by me, (*aside—folding her hands.*) I sang nothing at all that night.
- Smith.* Come, nightingale, repeat it—let me hear it once more—alone—with no alien ears to steal from me a portion of its sweetness.
- Daisy.* O, you want me to sing that song again. (*aside*) He's going crazy.
- Smith.* Yes, yes!
- Daisy.* You recollect it perfectly.
- Smith.* Yes! Yes! a thousand times have I hummed it over—warbled it in the night watches.
- Daisy.* You are a musician then?
- Smith.* Aw—yes—I flatter myself—a bit of a one—Amateur you know, but—a—connoisseur also.
- Daisy.* Ah! will you be kind enough then to tell me what style of music I sang on that occasion?
- Smith.* Style! a—o—what style! hem! (*aside,*) d—n it! O, yes, certainly, a— it was a—sticcato—a—a legato—a—obligato—a mullato—(*growing confident.*)
- Daisy.* (*Aside, laughing heartily.*) Mulatto yourself, you old brute, (*to him.*) Ah! thank you—yes—but I don't exactly recall it, would you? You remember it so well—have warbled it so often—would you—just hum a few bars for me?
- Smith.* (*Aside*) The devil—(*to her,*) hum it! O yes, certainly, that is—I will try—let me see—(*clears his throat and pants—tries to pitch his voice*)
- Daisy.* (*Rubbing her hands gleefully—speaking coquettishly.*) You thought it pretty Senator?
- Smith.* O, divine! how could it be otherwise, sung by those lips?
- Daisy.* O, pray go on.
- Smith.* (*Aside.*) The devil! she's a witch—what shall I do?
- Daisy.* (*Provokingly.*) I listen!
- Smith.* (*Makes a desperate effort and hums something, beginning with a burst and ending with a dismal wail.*)
- Daisy.* (*Aside.*) A cross between a drunken song and a psalm. I'm afraid—that is I am slightly out of practice—perhaps you would not—I fear—
- Daisy.* O! never mind, it's my stupidity—don't trouble yourself any more—I will sing you something else.
- Smith.* (*Delighted.*) O, do! do!—that will be enchanting. I shall then have two witching memories—two shafts of cupid.
- Daisy.* (*Aside.*) Two arrows in his ear—yes, that would

be what we would call a situation, (to him,) what shall I sing you, Senator? shall it be grave or gay—lively or severe?

Smith. O, something coquettish, delicious, enticing, buffo style, you know.

Daisy. (*Aside.*) Staccato—mullatto—O, yes! *sings* (a coquettish ballad—*Smith* meanwhile making signs of admiration and delight behind her, blows kisses to her, &c. *Daisy* finishes her song, turns and walks to L.)

Smith. It's all over with me! I'm clean gone—that finished me! By jove, I can't resist the little devil—Farewell, my bachler hood! (*Pulls down his vest and approaches Daisy.*)

Daisy. How did you like my song, Senator? Was it anything like the other one?

Smith. O, it was music's self—it was the quintessence of melody—But come, I want to ask you one question. (*Draws a chair for her and seats both.*)

Now there is a question which has puzzled many a wiser head than yours, and in which the destiny of many lives have been involved; but I want you to decide it. I want to know what is your opinion of unequal—that is, what do you think of a disparity—I should say—I mean—suppose now—picture to yourself two people.

Daisy. I do!

Smith. Congenial with each other, delightful companions—vivacious—sparkling—arch.

Daisy. You mean playmates!

Smith. Not at all—No! No! A man and a woman.

Daisy. Oh!

Smith. I say congenial, with symphetic tastes, both musicians—both we will say, artists.

Daisy (*aside.*) Ahem!

Smith. Suppose that there exists a trifling—a very slight and trifling disparity in their ages—suppose the woman—beautiful, lovely, enchanting, but innocent and unexperienced—the man (*straightening himself*) rich in years—I should say, I mean in the experiences of years—you understand me, you see?

Daisy. (*Laughing*) Yes; I see him!

Smith. Formed to be her protector—and yet young, too, of his age—active, elastic, buoyant—a-a-a-fine figure of a man. A man that could pursue her studies, and her pleasures at her side, who could become a very cupid for the nonce—who could warble with her like the nightingale, while he instructed her like a sage (*Daisy* looks at him.) Do you think that a few years of difference in the age of these two should stand in the way of any fond, close tie?

Daisy. Stand in the way? Of course not—Why should it?

Smith. (*Enchanted.*) Lovely being, I knew you would speak thus.

Daisy. Indeed, no! Let me see—he could be her dear old uncle—he might be her blessed old father.

Smith. (*Aghast.*) Dear old uncle! Blessed old father!

Daisy. (*Rocking herself gently and speaking confidentially.*) He

might be—He might be her dear precious, precious, deary old duck of a grandfather!

Smith. (*Starting to his feet.*) Grandfather!

Daisy. (*Looking up innocently at him.*) Senator do you know that—

Smith. (*Melted.*) What is it, fair one?

Daisy. That you look—yes—you do look—

Smith. How do I look, enchantress?

Daisy. Very like my dear old grandfather about the top of the head.

Smith. (*Aside.*) Zounds! This girl is very flurrrying—very flurring indeed. I'll swear she quite dashes me; but she must have mistaken my meaning—Come! I must not loose my opportunity—My golden opportunity—Wait till she learns what I really mean, and then you'll see! Ho! Ha! These women!

Daisy. Is it possible that that bomb penetrated that venerable skull at last! Then he will leave me in peace—but come—I must not insult the old wretch in my own house. (*Turns to him.*)

Smith. (*Approaching her.*) My sweet child!

Daisy. (*Aside*) Oh! That's a promising beginning.

Smith. You have totally misunderstood me. I spoke not of the tie paternal, nor that which exists between a dear uncle and his niece, or a revered grandfather.

Daisy. (*Aside.*) O pshaw! He's at it again.

Smith. I allude to a union between far more congenial hearts—a tie far stronger, fresher, and more ardent than any of these.

Daisy. Worse and worse (*aside resigning herself.*)

Smith. I was picturing to you the bond of wedded love between a heart enriched with wisdom, and one where lovely innocence sat enthroned.

Daisy. O—h! Jack! Jack! I begin to be frightened to death. It's coming! I know it is! O, if somebody would only set fire to the house—or something!

Smith. Daisy, you don't look on me as an o—o—old man?

Daisy. Yes—No—(*aside*) O, dear, how rude I am—about the age of "old Grimes," a suitable companion for old "Mother Hubbard," step-brother to Mrs. Noah.

Smith. And what is the rich accretion of years bestowed for but to serve and shield the faltering steps of youth?

Daisy. Yes; of course, (*aside.*) As an old nurse, or something of that sort—This is awful—I am growing desperate—I must put a stop to it.

Smith. Miss Wilson—Daisy—Sweetest of women—hear me say I love—

Daisy. (*With sudden dignity.*) Your country, I presume sir; we can never be too often assured of that by the representatives and guardians of her honor and safety!

Smith. (*Voilently repulsed.*) Ah! Oh! Yes; of course—that I suppose is not to be doubted. (*Daisy walks up and down triumphantly, with folded arms.*) Upon my soul—The young torpedo!

Zounds! I don't know what to make of her, (*pants.*) It can't be that the little witch is quizzing me? She can't be insensible to the honor of being attended by a U. S. Senator—No! Impossible! It is accident—A mere contretemps—She has totally misunderstood me—I will be more explicit—She is naturally a little dazzled by my position—Yes, you think it a great thing to be a Senator then?

Daisy. (*Aside.*) He thinks to awe me with his position now, (*to him*) most assuredly, sir, it ought to be a very great thing.

Smith. There is something imposing and grand in the office.

Daisy. (*Aside.*) What can the old fellow mean? (*To him.*) I can imagine nothing so grand and proud as to be the chosen treasurer of a great nation's glory.

Smith. (*Aside.*) Ah! Ha! I knew that would rouse her. (*To her.*) You think as I would have you,—but learn, sweet innocence, that there is another distinction and a higher glory than that, and that is to be the chosen wife—

(*Enter Phillis—rushing about and talking violently to herself.*)

Phillis. Just ges, I's gwine do my work and git dun wid it—dis time o'day—dat nigger gone clean mad. (*To them.*) Scuse me, Marse,—scuse me Missus. (*Lays down the brush.*)

Smith. (*Making pantomime of rage while Daisy laughs and nods to the girl. Exit PHILLIS.*) A most inopportune intrusion. (*To her.*) I was about to say, my dear young lady, that if the offer of a heart wholly subjected by your charms—a love drawn from the deepest.—

(*Enter Phillis running and talking violently to herself—setting down coal scuttle and blacking box.*)

Phillis. Dat ar ole Time—seems to me he cuts and runs like a skeered nigger; dar's no holding on to him no how; aint been two minutes, seems to me, sence breakfast an' now it am 2 o'clock. (*Daisy laughs and Smith rages.*) [*Exit c. d.*]

Smith. (*aside*) By heaven, is this to go on all day? I'll break that nigger's neck if she comes in here again. (*to her.*) The evil fates frown on me, and I fear that these domestic gusts will destroy your auspicious mood. Tell me sweet girl, would it seem to you a fair fate to find yourself the chosen consort of one of your country's.—

(*Enter Phillis with broom and dust pan and brush, flings them down, and rushes at the stove begins to polish it.*)

Smith. (*Stamping up and down*) The world would do homage to you. (*Tries to kiss her hand—Phillis jumps up and swinging the broom sweeps violently.*)

Daisy. Why! Phillis?

Phillis. Scuse me, Miss Daisy,—I axe your parding sixty hundred million times for such bad manners as sweepin in de parlor afore company, but don't you know Miss Daisy, dat cleanin up is Hebbin's first law, and dat you allers learned me dat, and dat it am arter two o'clock, and you spectin company to dinner 6-4-17-20-13

people; all de first in de land, wid diamonds and trains, and I'll jes not make one speck of dust, and you jest put your pocket handkerchief over your bressed head and dat ole gemmon he wont mind it a bit. (*Jumps up and down and sweeps terrifically, knocking down chairs and stools as she goes*)

Smith. O Lord! O! Miss Wilson. O! my coat my dear lady, I must positively beat a retreat; let me implore the honor of one moment's private interview with you. This afternoon, I will come. O, be not so cold hearted as to deny me, adieu— (*Coughs, strangles, and exit C. D.*)

Daisy. (*Laughing heartily*) O, Phillis, Phillis, you will certainly be the death of me. (*Exit Daisy at L. E.*)

Phillis. (*looking at the stove she has polished,*) I bet deres no nigger in dese United States kin make a stove shine like dat—He! He! He! ebery time I shine dat stove it makes me tink bout dat lazy nigger, Napoleon and de "elbow grease;" who'd eber believe dat dat fool went all round town huntin for "elbow grease," golly, didn't I laff when he tole me.

(*Enter Smith softly—sees Phillis—makes gesture of despair.*)

Phillis (*not seeing him.*) Dat are old Senator gub me a heap of trouble, I jes think I'll try and git somethin' outen him. Why don't he make me head scrubber in de Treasury 'partment.

Smith. (*aside*) By the Gods I'll do it. I wish it was head scrubber in h—l (*to her.*) My good woman, what is your name?

Phillis (*jumping off her feet terrified*) My name, my name sah! am Phillemoena Sally Ann Jenkins!

Smith. Are you the only servant in this house?

Phillis. Dars old Ginny—she's de cook, she's so ole she can't move outen de kitchen.

Smith. Thank the stars, is there nobody else?

Phillis. No sah, only Miss Daisy, she's missus.

Smith. Will you swear it?

Phillis. (*Surprised*) Ha! bible oaf swear! what for, Keuch! Keuch! (*aside*) de ole fella's bery anxious to know.

Smith. (*aside*) If I get her out of the way there will be nobody else that can disturb me.

(*To her.*) Here, I will give you a note to the Secretary of the Treasury, and you shall have what you want, (*sits at the table and writes. Gives her a note and his card.*) Here, take this to the Secretary of the Treasury, and this to your mistress.

Philly. (*Affecting to misunderstand and holding up card.*) Dis to de Secretary. and dis to Miss Daisy!

Smith. No, No! (*Aside.*) Damned stupidity, (*aloud.*) No! that to your Mistress, and that to the Secretary.

Philly. Yes, sah! jes so, sah! thank you sah! (*laughs aside*)—Ise guine to tell Miss Daisy all 'bout it. (*Exit L. E.*)

Smith. (*Throws up his hat and rubs his hands, and exults.*) Thank the Lord, I believe I've got rid of them all for good.

(Enter Daisy.)

Smith. (*Approaching her.*) At last! At last! At last! I see you alone, with no abhorrent interruption to destroy me—O happy hour.

Daisy. Why Senator, you look as if you had met some good fortune.

Smith. (*Aside.*) And so I have, (*to her,*) good fortune—is it not enough that I see you, that I am permitted to gaze undisturbed—

(Enter Philly.)

Philly. (*Running, dancing, and hurrahing.*) O Miss Daisy, O Lord a massy, who would ebber thought, as marse Jack and Napoleon an' de whole great big regiment of nigger sogers 'ud be back here dis bressed mornin' an' a marchin' 'long de street to dis berry house, fierce as the debbil.

Smith. (*Aside, sinking back.*) Heavens and earth! what accident is this?

Daisy. Master Jack's regiment—Philly! is it possible! are you sure, (*delightedly,*) did you see them yourself?

Philly. Yes, yes, I seed em marching along de street as I was gwine out de door. Marse Jack ridin' on a horse—and Napoleon—O golly, you ought seen him a struttin like a gineral, jis as if he owned de whole place.

Smith. The devil take it—I might have known that Jones was too drunk at the supper the other night to know which regiment I wanted ordered to Alaska.

Philly. Ise gwine to look out de hall window and see em cum by. (*Exit c. d.*)

Smith. (*Aside.*) I have but a few minutes now—I must make the best of them—deuce take it, (*to Daisy,*) Miss Wilson—Daisy! all the fates have conspired against me, but listen to me one instant: you will not allow this—aw'—unlucky, that is unexpected arrival to distract your thoughts from me, to obliterate the memory of my devoted—a'—ardent, poetical attentions.

Daisy. (*Aside not hearing him.*) Jack is coming, Jack is coming.

Smith. I am aware that I have impressd you a'—somewhat deeply—but (*Daisy starts.*)

(Enter Philly.)

Philly. O' Miss Daisy, (*dancing*) I hears em a' comin, 'hallelujah! I means hur-ra! (*Exit c. d.*)

Smith. (*Aside.*) Devil take her. You will not banish me now! When shall I come to you again; not when that young fellow is by, you know—but.—

(Enter Philly.)

Philly. O' Miss Daisy I hears de music; dere dey cum—

How I obtained a Commission.

O' Golly! dat nigger Napoleon don't he tink he's some: (*music of band outside.*) O Lord! dere it am. (*Exit c. d.*)

Daisy. There he is—there he is, (*goes towards door.*)

Smith. One moment! One pledge! (*falls upon his knees, and seizes her hand, she struggles, laughing and looking towards the door.*)

Daisy. (*Aside.*) Old fool! O' Jack, Jack, here's a plight to meet one's lover in.

(*Enter Napoleon, followed by soldiers and Philly.*)

Nap. (*Sees Senator on his knees.*) Halloo! (*to soldiers,*) Charge on dat man an' stick him wid a bayonet—(*soldiers point bayonets and charge.*)

(*Enter Jack.*)

Smith. (*jumping up and retreating, alarmed.*) Stop that—what do you mean, d'n you?

Jack. (*Drawing his sword.*) Halt! shoulder arms! don't you know that is Senator Wilberforce S. Smith—present arms! (*runs to Daisy and seizes her hands, Napoleon and Philly dance, soldiers present arms.*) Remember your promise—the moment I returned you were to be my wife.

Nap. Yes, yes, jes so; golly, yes, and Philly you are to be Mrs. Orderly Sergeant, Philly Louis Napoleon Bonaparte dis yer minit, you knows you is.

Philly. Is I—golly is we all to be married—hurrah!

Smith. (*Aside.*) And did I give the whole family positions and get them out of the way for this—"It's like a dream—a hideous dream."

Jack. (*Leading Daisy towards him.*) Senator will you allow me to present to you my betrothed wife and give you a very informal invitation to our wedding.

Smith. (*Confusedly.*) Wedding—betrothed—but its my wedding—That is, I am the one I mean—I should say—I refuse—I—I—protest against the whole thing, its all out of order—why, damn it, its unconstitutional.

[*Rushes towards c. d., turns at the door, and shakes his fist at Jack, the others laugh.*]

SMITH.

SOLDIERS,
JACK AND DAISY,

DROP.

SOLDIERS,
NAPOLEON AND PHILLIS.

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